Dear Bill,

**Shaping Orthopaedic services in Tayside**

Thank you for sharing your Major Service Change assessment with us for comment.

It is our understanding from the proposal that:

- All emergency operative trauma in Orthopaedics for the Perth and Kinross population will transfer to Ninewells Hospital, Dundee. Non-operative trauma patients will continue to be admitted directly to Perth Royal Infirmary. If a patient requires inpatient care longer than 72 hours post-operatively, then they will return to a facility in the Perth and Kinross area.

- An Orthopaedic Centre of Excellence will be developed at Perth Royal Infirmary and potentially provide a facility for a further 400 elective cases per year. This will potentially reduce travel to Dundee for the Perth and Kinross population and reduce waiting times for procedures for Dundee and Angus patients.

- Elective orthopaedic surgery currently carried out at the National Waiting Times Centre at the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank will potentially be returned to NHS Tayside which will provide surgery closer to home for patients within Tayside.

**View on status of proposals**

On the basis of the information that you have sent us, we have considered whether this proposed change will be likely to meet the general threshold for ‘major change’. This has included reviewing the proposed change alongside other changes in Scotland that have been identified as ‘major’ to identify any comparable changes in recent years.

We noted the proposed benefits to patients of the preferred model; timely access to appropriate unplanned care facilities, increased unplanned and elective theatre capacity, reduced waiting times for an elective procedures and potential reduction of travel out with Tayside and within Tayside for
elective procedures.

Having reviewed the information shared with us, and taking into account the related changes in recent years and previous strength of feeling in communities, we think that the proposals do meet the threshold for "major service change" due to:

- The proposals including changes to emergency surgery.
- The significant local, public and political concern to similar proposals for general surgery in 2017. There may be a perception that Perth Royal Infirmary is being ‘downgraded’ and services ‘centralised’ at Ninewells. A three month public consultation may help to address some of these concerns and clarify the current and future level of service.
- Similar changes elsewhere in Scotland were considered "major service change".
- The distance that some people may need to travel from more rural and remote areas of Tayside, both for treatment and to visit patients. The distance from Perth Royal Infirmary to Ninewells Hospital, Dundee is approximately 20 miles.

Next steps

We note the engagement to date and the involvement of NHS Tayside’s Public Partners in the development of the consultation materials. There should be a consistency of language in the consultation materials in relation to the description of the proposed services (for example in the use of terms such as planned/unplanned, elective/non elective, operative/non operative etc.) so that people can be clear about exactly what is being proposed and understand where patients will be treated.

We are aware that the Transport and Access group has been set up to work in partnership with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), local authority and transport providers to address concerns related to transport and access. It will be important for NHS Tayside to share information on the work of this group during the consultation, seek feedback on the suggested ways to negate the impact of further travel for the Perth and Kinross population for unplanned surgery and to gather views from the Dundee and Angus population on travel to the proposed centre of Excellence at Perth Royal Infirmary.

The process to date has been clinically led, and informed by engagement over the last few years on the development of the Transforming Tayside strategy. It is important that the consultation process clearly explains how the model was developed, the reasons why other options were discounted and be clear that all responses to the consultation will be considered. In particular, the NHS Tayside Board should give genuine consideration to any alternative suggestions that are put forward as a result of the consultation.

If the proposals change we ask that you contact us at the earliest opportunity as it may be necessary to review this position.

Whilst the points raised represent the view of the Scottish Health Council, the decision on whether a change to services should be considered "major" rests with the Scottish Government.

Please contact me if you wish to clarify any of the above points.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie